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Partial Soviet Standard Brief No 7

## SOVIET MORALE, FRATERNIZATION AND PROPAGANDA

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Partial Soviet Standard Brief No 7

## SOVIET MORALE, FRATERNIZATION AND PROPAGANDA

## A. MORALE FACTORS

1. Dependent Policy

## a. Officers

50X1 [ ] the dependents of Soviet army officers arriving in Austria in Oct 53. Of the four married officers [ ] all had 50X1 their dependents arrive at this time. The fifth company officer was a bachelor. 50X1

50X1 50X1 Company officers were required to arrange for their own quarters on the Austrian economy. They were paid a certain unknown amount, as a rental allowance [ ] was the total number of dependents that each officer had. [ ] one senior lieutenant of his company that he, the lieutenant, received about 3,000 schillings a month after the arrival of his dependents. [ ] did not know what portion of this was considered as a rental allowance nor what the officer had received previously. He heard from conversations with other men of his unit that the average rent an officer had to pay for two rooms with kitchen and bathroom privileges was about 200 schillings per month. During his tour in Austria, [ ] had seen dependent children of 50X1 officers as old as 16 years in BLUMAU at his battalion headquarters. One such child was the 16 year old daughter of an unknown major who was the battalion Chief of Supply. [ ] dependent 50X1 children of school age were attending a Russian school, the location and details of which were unknown to him.

At the battalion headquarters area, the senior officers (major and higher) had quarters in the garrison. All other officers [ ] were 50X1 required to live on the Austrian economy.

## b. Career EM

[ ] it 50X1 was permitted by regulation for career soldiers to bring their dependents to Austria, he personally could not recollect ever having seen or heard of such a case.

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## c. Conscripts

50X1 In addition to the above personnel, [ ] Soviet Air Force privates who worked in an unknown Air Force radio receiving center located in the same building with the Radio Receiving Center of the 135th Sep Air Warning Bn in RODAUN (4808N-1616E), Austria. These two privates were married to two Soviet civilian female employees. These women were reputedly working as radio operators in the same installation as their husbands. The two couples, [ ] occupied quarters in a communal dwelling within the garrison of the parent unit of the Air Force Radio Receiving Center, an unidentified Air Force Signal Company in KALKSBURG (4808N-1615E), Austria. According to information [ ] the Air Force personnel of the 50X1 Center, this company was subordinate to an unidentified Air Force regiment stationed in WIENER NEUSTADT (4748N-1615E), Austria.

50X1 The only explanation ever offered to obligatory tour EM of [ ] as to why they were not permitted to bring their families to Austria was that they were serving a comparatively short three year temporary tour in Austria and that it would not be practicable to bring all dependents of such personnel abroad. This was a standard explanation used by the Company Zampolit during political instruction whenever anyone asked why his family could not join him.

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2. Passes and Leavesa. Passes

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[ ] the restrictions placed on freedom of movement of officers during off-duty hours was dependent on the verbal orders of the unit CO. Conscripted EM, however, required a written pass that permitted them to be absent from the garrison for a maximum of four hours and only to the town nearest the military installation to which assigned. [ ] not sure what restrictions were placed on the enlisted career soldiers but believed that they also required some type of written pass to be absent from the garrison.

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In Jul 54, a further unidentified order was published by what [ ] was CGF Headquarters which revised some personnel policies and explained others in precise language. [ ] some of the items in the order dealt specifically with passes and movement of personnel away from the garrison. He claimed that he was quite familiar with the contents of the order, although he had personally never seen it, because his company CO had on several occasions called him in and read the contents of the order from end to end in order to be sure that he, of all the men in the company, understood the current policies. The following is what he remembered of the order:

(1) All restaurants and drinking establishments in Austrian communities were off limits to all Soviet military and civilian personnel.

(2) Any social contact with the local population was forbidden. Personnel were permitted to make legitimate purchases in town but were forbidden to visit Austrian homes or frequent places of entertainment or public gatherings.

(3) Enlisted personnel could be granted passes to visit nearby civilian communities, in groups of three or four only, during off-duty days; but such passes would be limited to daylight hours only.

(4) Soviet military personnel were not to visit Soviet military installations other than their own except on business. Social contact between members of different units was discouraged.

(5) Off-duty passes for enlisted personnel would designate the place authorized to be visited. This would normally be the civilian community nearest the EM's garrison.

(6) No government vehicles were to be dispatched solely for transporting personnel to town. Any government vehicle dispatched on a trip would have a legitimate pay load of cargo for both legs of the journey.

(7) Trip tickets would no longer be written for a five day dispatch but would be written for a 24 hour period only. All trip tickets had to be signed by the unit CO or the unit C/S. Any trips longer than 24 hours would be dispatched with a separate trip ticket for each 24 hour period or fraction thereof, signed by the unit CO or C/S.

(8) No vehicle would be dispatched for a trip longer than 90 km, except in an emergency or for an authorized troop movement in keeping with the basic mission of the unit.

(9) No vehicle would depart from its garrison without a commissioned officer in charge.

(10) It was positively forbidden for any vehicle to make a road trip longer than 500 km under any circumstances. Trips necessitating the transport of vehicles for longer distances would be accomplished through the utilization of railroad facilities.

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(11) No vehicles would be driven on Sundays or holidays.

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[redacted] each of the above instructions was violated a considerable number of times. It was finally decided by some unknown higher authority that unit vehicles were being dispatched illegally. As a result, an unidentified Truck Transport Battalion was instructed to move all supplies to the 135th Sep Air Warning Bn sometime in the late summer of 1954.

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[redacted]

The gasoline swindle was accomplished [redacted] in the following manner. The gasoline supply for his truck was based on an average gasoline consumption per kilometer times total kms traveled. He would set the trip speedometer of his vehicle ahead at different times and take the gasoline thus "saved" and turn it over to the battalion motorcycle courier, a Pvt Victor ZHABIN. This individual would then take the gasoline and transfer it to the unknown buyer. [redacted] that ZHABIN was always very honest and gave Source the full amount received. 50X1

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[redacted]

The Battalion Dep CO of the Technical Section, Major (fnu) SOROKIN, was in a small room off the main bar. The owner of the establishment was visibly agitated and told the two soldiers that an officer was in the next room and that he would not sell them liquor. At this moment the major came out and asked the men why they were in this place. They lied and said that the Voyentorg was closed and they wished to buy some tobacco. The major told them to return immediately to the compound. They complied and heard no more of the incident. [redacted] this was the only occasion that he had ever been caught in such a violation although his company CO seemed to suspect that he was constantly disobeying the standing orders requiring troops to remain in the unit area unless granted a specific pass.

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#### b. Leave

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#### (1) Officers

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[redacted] Soviet officers stationed in Austria were authorized 45 days leave and a maximum of 15 days travel time per annum. He was unable to define his source of information but believed that this was general knowledge.

#### (2) Career EM

Career soldiers were also authorized a certain unknown amount of leave each year along with travel time.

#### (3) Conscripted EM

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NCO's and privates serving their obligatory tour of three years were only granted leaves for meritorious and compassionate reasons. [redacted] such leaves were not applied for by the individual but were granted by the unit CO. A soldier might be given leave if he was outstanding without having a compassionate reason; but no matter how compassionate the reason no soldier got a leave for this reason alone if he was not also an outstanding soldier. Meritorious service was generally accepted to mean a commendation by an inspecting officer during the semi-annual training inspection or the achievement of high proficiency along political lines. A valid compassionate reason was a serious illness in the family.

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Conscript leaves were generally for about 10 full days at home with the necessary travel time allowed. [redacted] conscripts who had received two or three leaves during their tour, but these were rare exceptions since the greater majority of these EM served their full period of service without leave. 50X1

After the tours of the conscript EM [redacted] were extended from three to four years, [redacted] the men in the unit located a further unidentified order that authorized Air Force and Coast Artillery unit personnel who had four-year terms of service a leave at least once during the four-year period. When the men asked the company CO about this order and if it applied to them, he replied that even if it did apply in theory to the unit, it would make no difference whatsoever. He would continue to give leaves only to those men who, he thought, deserved them. 50X1

[redacted] officers and career soldiers taking leave in Austria and remaining in the garrison. He had never heard of any conscript EM doing this. 50X1

#### (4) Percentages Authorized to be on Leave

[redacted] not know what percentage of officers and career EM was authorized to be on leave at any given time. He believed that since they all received a leave of about two months including travel time, it must mean that one-sixth could be absent at any given time. Conscripts, he thought, were authorized about three per cent absentees. 50X1

#### (5) Methods of Obtaining Compassionate Leave

All compassionate leave requests had to originate in the service-man's family. Such requests were submitted to the local Voenkomat, and a request that an individual be authorized a leave due to serious illness in the family or other equally compassionate grounds was sent to the EM's company CO. Source had no further information on the administration of leave requests.

#### (6) Morale Effects of Leave Policies

[redacted] those personnel who received no leave were naturally bitter. Those who went on leave appeared to be satisfied with the current policy. 50X1

### 3. State of Discipline

#### a. Drunkenness

[redacted] there were two privates in the Battalion guardhouse. One was in for five days for consuming intoxicating liquor in the garrison and the other was serving a 20 day sentence for drinking in a restaurant. His crime was all the more serious since he was alone when apprehended. This latter soldier claimed to have been called before an unknown general officer during the investigation of his case. 50X1

[redacted] the average number of men confined in the guard house at any one time was about two or three. If there were any more violators of standing orders, the battalion CO punished them in other ways to cover up a high rate of breaches of discipline. 50X1

[redacted] the major reason for Soviet EM getting into trouble in his unit was the restriction placed on consumption of alcoholic drinks. According to him everyone in the Soviet Army drank whenever there was an opportunity. EM took the risk of getting caught without giving it too much thought and went to town to frequent taverns, sometimes if they even only had the price of one or two drinks in their pockets. Officers too were often seen in town breaking the rules by patronizing Austrian drinking establishments. However, as officers had much more freedom of movement and did not have to have written permission to be absent from their post, they were not punished for the violations unless they appeared in a drunken condition in a public place where their unit CO could see them. An officer who would see an EM drinking in a civilian establishment would almost always take the opportunity to reprimand the EM and possibly report him. Source stated that it was not embarrassing to an officer to reprimand an EM for an act of which he himself was also guilty. 50X1

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## Venereal Disease

No venereal disease was [ ] to exist among Soviet troops in Austria. Although he was repeatedly asked about the incidence rate of VD, what punitive and remedial action was taken by the authorities and of any knowledge he might have of personnel who had been so afflicted, he insisted that he had no knowledge on the subject. 50X1

## c. Disobedience of Orders

Disobedience of orders were very prevalent [ ] according to him. He said that it was common for EM to refuse to carry out orders of NCO's and officers. He was, however, only able to give one specific case as an example of this alleged poor discipline.. 50X1

50X1 [ ] Air Warning Bn agreed to jointly refuse to get up for the morning roll call. Word was passed around to all the men in the platoon by several ringleaders that the first individual to arise would be beaten by all of the others.

50X1 When the platoon sergeant came into the barracks to awake the men, he was struck in the face with a boot by an unknown soldier. All the others then yelled at him to get out of the barracks and not come back if he valued his life. The platoon sergeant then went to the company CO and returned with him. The latter shouted at the men to stop this nonsense and get up immediately. [ ] the men in the platoon merely yelled at him to get out or else he would be beaten. Then the company CO left. There was no further action taken by any one but after about an hour all the men, by mutual consent, began to arise. [ ] that there was no punitive action taken by the company CO for this mutiny and that the act was not repeated. Shortly after this, however, about seven of the EM of the platoon disappeared, and it was rumoured in the company that they had been selected as the ring leaders of the disorders and sent back to the USSR to serve out the remainder of their obligatory tour. 50X1

50X1 [ ] was first formed in 1952, the replacement personnel sent to the unit from various units in Austria were the worst trouble makers in their original units. Rumours were circulating in 1952 among the EM that a letter had been sent to the Battalion CO from the CG of CGF pointing out that 25 percent of all the criminal acts performed by Soviet soldiers in Austria were done by the personnel of this Battalion. 50X1 [ ] these criminal acts included murder, rape, robbery, assault, pilferage, and mutiny. However, he would not provide any details in order to substantiate his claims. 50X1

50X1 50X1 He stated, however, that conduct and discipline in the unit improved considerably [ ] during the period of time from its activation [ ] since normal demobilization and forceful return of trouble makers brought about the replacement of these men with average soldiers arriving with the replacement shipments from the USSR. 4

4. State of Morale

50X1 [ ] the morale in his unit was good in general. Complaints were few and were not in the nature of violent "gripes"; they just indicated general dissatisfaction. Some of the complaints, as he recalled them, were as follows: the men who received no leave complained about the leave system; the pass system had unpopular features, including passes being of short duration (4 hours) and having narrow geographic limits; men complained about the bad quality and monotony of the food; and everyone felt that the medical care was very poor. 5

## a. Feelings about Officers

50X1 [ ] no reason to be envious of officers as he believed that there was nothing to hold back any individual

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Criminal Elements in Source's Unit

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criminals with known records were not sent outside the USSR although they were called for service. However, this did not preclude crime among Soviet troops in Austria. His battalion, as stated previously, was notorious for its high percentage of crime immediately after its formation.

50X1 [redacted] reluctant to describe specific instances or give names of any of the personnel involved. He merely stated that a certain Ukrainian, who was a huge man and whose name he would not provide, was the main ringleader of most of the trouble. This same Ukrainian was caught by Austrian police and a Kommandatura patrol during a gang rape of Austrian women in a small town near BADEN in 1952. All of these unknown men were gathered together and sent to an unidentified Soviet unit in Silesia (whether East Germany or Poland not known) according to rumor. 50X1 [redacted] although prior to 1952 known criminals were not sent abroad, personnel with known criminal records began to arrive in his unit in Austria in 1953.

50X1 [redacted] the attitude of the Soviet military authorities towards criminals was similar to the attitude of the Soviet government: that thieves and robbers were considered to be politically reliable. He said that greater punishment was always meted out for a political or subversive act than for a crime. Often apprehended thieves went unpunished in the army. He believed that the Soviet government in this case was right because the thieves and robbers were more pro-regime than many of the other personnel. Therefore, it made sense when a man accused of jokes against the regime should get a sentence of 25 years and a thief who after all was only "helping himself to Communal property should go unpunished." 8.

To further support his claim that the government was lax in dealing with criminals, he stated that on 14 Apr 53 he had read in the newspaper and had heard on the radio announcements of a general amnesty by the government to all minor criminals serving sentences given by military courts since the beginning of WW II. Such criminals included all except those convicted of murder, banditry, capital crimes and any political misdemeanor. The origin of this order, according to the news media, was the Central Committee in MOSCOW. 8.

**B. FRATERNIZATION**

50X1 [redacted] the official attitude toward fraternization with Austrians by Soviet military personnel was that it was strictly forbidden. He believed that the official attitude was also the enforced attitude and was supported by 50X1 the officers of his unit.

50X1 [redacted] only personnel he knew who were interested in or responsible for controlling and reporting the violators of the non-fraternization policy were as follows:

a. Counterintelligence officers, unit commanders, other officers (as the spirit moved them) and soldier informers. 50X1

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c. [ ] Austrian Communist reporting of soldier violators of the non-fraternization policy constituted too much of a threat, since the Communist Party in Austria was reputed to be very weak. He had never heard of any such case.

### C. PROPAGANDA

#### 1. Voice of America

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[ ] had listened to several broadcasts originating from the Voice of America on unit radio sets [ ]. He could not describe what he had heard except that he remembered never hearing any news broadcasts. All such listening was done surreptitiously, and personnel in his unit never discussed the programs to his knowledge. He had heard radio operators of his company discussing on what frequencies the Voice of America could be heard but he himself was unable to name either the frequencies or times of broadcasts. He believed that all radio operators in his unit who were on radio duty listened to such broadcasts when they believed they were not being watched by other personnel.

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[ ] never heard or seen any orders specifically stating that listening to these broadcasts were forbidden. This subject was never brought up to his knowledge during political studies classes or political information periods. He stated, however, that everyone generally understood that such listening was considered reactionary and was forbidden.

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[ ] one individual who had been caught while listening to the voice of America. He described him as a quiet little private, name unknown, who was obedient and hard working. The rumor in the unit was that this private had been caught by a senior lieutenant while listening to a Voice of America broadcast and was sent to the USSR that same night. At any rate the soldier disappeared from the unit promptly.

50X1

[ ] knew of one sergeant, name unknown and who was demobilized in 1953, who was caught listening to the Voice of America by one of the men in his squad. The man who caught him blackmailed this sergeant and made his life miserable until the day of his demobilization. This was considered to be quite a joke among the more ribald EM of the battalion.

#### 2. Printed Western Propaganda

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[ ] never seen any Western printed propaganda. He had heard of such leaflets, however, from soldiers [ ] who were serving on air-warning posts near the US - Soviet demarcation line in Austria. These soldiers allegedly mentioned to him in idle conversation on several occasions that they were quite showered with such propaganda. He could not recall if they had described such leaflets to him or which soldiers had told him these stories.

#### 3. Effectiveness of Western Propaganda

50X1

[ ] any Soviet soldier would take the time to read or listen to printed Western propaganda if he was sure that he could do so unobserved. He personally thought that such propaganda would be most effective on ex-collective farm workers, since they had personally experienced the misery of life in Communist state and therefore would recognize the truth in any criticism of the Communist system. City dwellers, he believed, would not be quite so susceptible to propaganda received from the free world, since these people lived under conditions completely different from those of the rural workers. The city dweller was better off and had seen with his own eyes some of the achievements of Communism in construction of municipal and government buildings, new schools, hospitals, sport stadiums and other buildings. The city dweller was also more carefully indoctrinated in school and in his work.

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and to attend more instruction by Communist agitators than the farm worker did. Also, the city dweller could easily see how his personal position and mode of life could be improved materially if he became active in the Party. Party members received better schooling, jobs and housing than others.

#### 4. Effectiveness of Soviet Propaganda

50X1 [redacted] Soviet propaganda was listened to in the army simply because it was part of the scheduled program and there was no way to avoid it. He did not think that either the Zampolits who gave the instruction or the soldiers who had to listen actually believed that what they were hearing was the truth. He felt that everyone involved in Communist indoctrination recognized most of the falsehoods preached but said little, since they were following the path of least resistance by being quiet.

50X1 [redacted] most Soviet army personnel were basically against Communism, he stated that none really dared to stand up and argue against the Party line, as this would immediately bring everyone's attention to the lone non-conformist. 50X1 [redacted] no one dared to be different politically from the mass, because such people would be quickly disposed of. Also, those that were left could see the object lesson against being different by counting the number of people whom they had once known and who simply had vanished. Thus, he believed that the strongest weapon Soviet propaganda had for attracting passive listeners was the fear of punishment that everyone had. 9.

50X1 [redacted] the majority of the men in the Soviet army feel the way he described about the system, then why did not more Soviet servicemen defect to the free world. He answered that the most important deterrent to defection was the realization of most servicemen that such action would immediately bring reprisals against their families. The family of the serviceman was the collateral held by the Soviet government against his defection. Those who had no family were not permitted near the demarcation line. He brought out one specific case of a soldier in his Battalion who was serving on an air-warning post near the demarcation line in 1953, who was transferred to battalion headquarters and "never permitted to leave the Battalion area" because it was discovered that he was an orphan. 50X1

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